ANC News

Notes from the February 18th ANC Meeting

The ANC meeting was opened by Vice Chair Joan Squeri. State Representative Alvin Thompson was not able to make the meeting due to urgent family business, but his representatives attended the meeting and listened to issues from the council which included dangerous crosswalks at the Fresh Pond Parkway.

Cara Seideman, Transportation Program Manager from the Cambridge Community Development Department, visited the council with a slide show to begin the process that will create “traffic calming” on Oxford Street.

There will be a great deal of planning necessary to make Oxford Street a place for walking and spending time with neighbors. One third of public places in cities are streets, and cars take up a large amount of space per person. Streets with heavy traffic usually have neighbors who aren’t friends, and this is reversed on streets with light traffic. The speed of a vehicle is directly related to how seriously a person is hurt if hit by one.

“Traffic calming” slows down cars by redesigning streets that discourage speeding. Wide, straight streets encourage speeding. Trees can narrow streets, as can speed tables, speed bumps and many other devices. [See chart on page 2 for more information on traffic calming.]

Oxford Street provides an opportunity to reconfigure streets due to the upcoming sewer project that will necessitate reconstruction of the street. It will begin in the Agassiz neighborhood in the next 18 months, although the schedule depends on completion of the project currently under way.

The months until construction begins will be a time for planning in the neighborhood. Community Development will work with the Agassiz community to draw up designs, start plans and open the process up to the wider community.

Steve Crawford and David Erlandson from Lesley College came to discuss the new route developed for the Lesley College Shuttle Bus from Mellen St. to Porter Exchange. At an earlier council meeting, it was agreed to route the bus onto Mass Ave., stopping at Mellen St. rather than going down Mellen. On February 1 that change took effect. The bus takes 4 trips per hour.

Steve and Dave asked for neighborhood input on the bus route. It was noted that visibility, when exiting from Mellen St. was poor. A meter was just taken out last week to improve the situation. The stop was considered to be unsightly by some, but if the route becomes permanent, the bus shelter will be improved. Another request was for a narrower, quieter, alternative energy bus.

Information on the March 18 ANC Meeting

Cambridge Residents for Growth Management

For many decades Cambridge has been the kind of place where people wanted to live and could afford to live. These qualities are now threatened by excessive development that is encouraged by city policy as implemented in the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance.

• Maximum permitted development is overtaxing the natural environment and man-made infrastructure that made Cambridge an attractive place to settle, raise a family and live in old age.

Next ANC Meeting
March 18, Tuesday
7:30 p.m.
Agassiz School Dining Hall
28 Sacramento Street Entrance
Agenda:
Cambridge residents will present a city-wide GROWTH MANAGEMENT petition (See above for more information.)
• The pressure to develop to the maximum is driving out low and middle income residents and local businesses that are necessary for a vital community.
• Maximum development is steadily eliminating the human, civic and commercial fabric that makes Cambridge more than the site of two excellent universities.

Excessive development spurred by a rising economy and recent removal of legal restraints, is occurring in residential neighborhoods, commercial squares and former industrial areas. The reaction of full-time residents is seen in growing opposition and political and legal conflict over specific development projects.

Our goal is to change the direction of the City to ensure that it will remain livable and affordable in the future. The needed change can only occur through the united action of residents, new and old, in all neighborhoods. We therefore seek the support of all Cambridge residents for a new growth management initiative and for changes in the Zoning Ordinance needed to guide future development in our City. These proposed changes in Zoning are based on the following principles.

1. Equitable reduction of allowed building sizes from present limits.
2. Limitation of building height in all areas.
3. Reduction in building heights in high density areas where they border lower ones.
4. Increased protection of green space.
5. Increased provision for affordable housing.
6. Public review for all projects with significant impacts.

Many of these principles have been endorsed in studies conducted by the City, notably the Comprehensive Growth Policy Plan and various neighborhood studies, but few have been enacted in policy. Some areas of the city have recently been rezoned, but excessive development is still permitted in too much of our city.

To keep Cambridge livable and affordable, and recognizing the need for fairness to all neighborhoods and property owners, we pledge to support implementation of a growth management policy through prompt revision of the Cambridge Zoning Code and, if necessary, other future leg-

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**Calming traffic**

Traffic calming” devices being installed in a growing number of US cities are aimed at enhancing neighborhood life and improving pedestrian safety by slowing down cars rather than banning them entirely. Most of the features are relatively inexpensive to add if a street is already being reconstructed.

**Speed kills**

A major motivation for “traffic calming” projects is that the percentage of pedestrians who die when struck by cars soars as traffic speed increases.

**“Speed tables”**

Cambridge officials plan to build a “speed table” to slow down traffic passing through the intersection of Dudley and Cedar streets. The device, pictured below, uses ramps to raise the street to curb level, forcing pedestrians a smooth crosswalk. The ramps can accommodate slow-moving traffic.

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**Sources:** US Dept. of Transportation, “Killing Speed and Saving Lives,” Conservation Law Foundation.

*Massachusetts Traffic Calming Programs* by Nancy43 Tyler-Crosser
The Whistler March 1997

We seek the support of all residents and groups in Cambridge. As part of our efforts to earn support, and to make our zoning petition as good as possible, we are asking groups in each neighborhood to hold public open meetings during March so that the details of the draft petition can be presented, questions answered and comments received from as many people as possible. Our aim is to submit a zoning petition during April.

for more information, contact one of the following members: Joel Bard 547-3210 (Agassiz resident), Dan Geer 492-2129, John Pitkin 492-4035, Hugh Russell 864-9896, or Phil Sego 492-1032.

The North Cambridge News has quoted Hugh Russell, Planning Board member, as saying "There isn’t any procedure for the Board to initiate such proposals - it’s really a reactive body. When I would suggest that we act on changes people requested, the answer would be that it was too much to do, especially right now. So I decided to write up a proposal and share it with others. I’m not surprised we’re finding support, because I was just assembling what I’d been hearing for years."

Internet Connection

If you have access to an internet connection, you can keep up with many City events and issues. For information on most City meetings and notices, go to http://www.ci.cambridge.ma.us/notices/notices.html.

To see the value of your home, or other homes in Cambridge, go to the Cambridge Assessor’s Database at http://www.ci.cambridge.ma.us/cgi-bin/assessor.cgi.

❖ Neighborhood News ❖

Cottonwood Cafe

The Cottonwood Cafe has met with representatives from the Porter Square Neighbors Association, the Agassiz Neighborhood Council and other abutters in Cambridge and Somerville to discuss their request for an entertainment license.

They are requesting a license that will allow four musicians with amplified music, but no dancing in the back of their restaurant space in the Porter Exchange Building. Representatives were receptive to the license at the meeting because there is ample parking behind the restaurant and the Cottonwood does not have any history of problems in its neighborhood.

Cottonwood has agreed to limit seating in the area where music will be played, but they do not want the license to be restricted to their business. Rather, they would like it to be a license that will be available to the next owner.

This meeting was arranged in advance of a hearing with the License Commission. When Porter Square was developed, stringent conditions were placed on entertainment licenses in that building in order to prevent the building from becoming a disturbance to the residential neighborhoods it borders.

For more information call the ANC at 349-6287.

Nominating Committee to seek Board Candidates

The ANC Board of Directors, according to the by-laws, has appointed a Nominating Committee to seek candidates to the Board of Directors.

The ANC Board of Directors governs the corporation which provides children’s programs as well as community services and events in the Agassiz neighborhood. The board meets monthly just prior to the ANC meetings on the third Tuesday of each month.

Interested candidates should send a letter explaining why they are interested in serving on the board and any relevant experience they may have or a resume if available.

Send information to Nominating Committee c/o ANC, 20 Sacramento St., Cambridge, MA 02138. Call Terry DeLancey at 349-6287 if you have any questions.

Housing Issues

Garfield St. Housing Meeting March 4

Cambridge Housing Authority will meet with Garfield St. neighbors on March 4, Tuesday, at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center at 20 Sacramento St. to discuss the ongoing construction of public housing on the corner of Garfield and Mass. Ave.

Agenda items include issues from the last meeting, colors and a general update on construction at the site. Public is welcome to attend. Call 349-6287 for more information.

Affordable Housing Committee to Meet March 20

In response to the last ANC meeting, Roger Herzog, Housing Director for Cambridge Community Development, will meet with Agassiz neighbors interested in affordable housing. This first meeting of the ongoing affordable housing committee will be held on Thursday March 20 at 7:00 p.m. in the Agassiz Community Center, 20 Sacramento St.

The agenda will begin with tenant issues regarding affordable housing purchased by the City from Harvard and located in the Agassiz neighborhood. Residents are encouraged to attend and to raise other issues for future meetings. A future meeting schedule will also be planned.

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Masso's Kitchen
Oriental Tours & Tours
Pappagallo's
Salmon
Journals
Tanprees
Tea
Total Travel
World Snowboard & Sport Depot

PORTER EXCHANGE
1815 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE CAMBRIDGE
Convenient to MBTA "E" Line at Porter Square
Concerts for Housing Justice

A series of concerts have been planned to aid low income Cambridge tenants with their legal fees when faced with eviction. For a listing of March events, see below in Cultural Happenings on page 6. Proceeds from the concerts will be placed in a legal defense fund for tenants.

Traffic and Transportation

Wanted: Safe Sidewalks for All

The DPW appreciates the assistance of Cambridge residents in keeping sidewalks snow and ice free. Unshoveled or icy sidewalks can be reported by phone to the DPW's sidewalk snow removal 24 hour hotline: 349-4903. All you need is an accurate street address. The property owner doesn't get a warning ticket until a DPW inspector has confirmed that a violation exists. Later violations incur $25 a day fines. If you or someone you know needs help finding a snowplow or paying one, call the Council on Aging at 349-6220 during business hours or the DPW hotline, 349-4903, and leave a message anytime.

Remember: Stock up on sand. Ice is lethal. Elders and the disabled can become truly house-bound when conditions get icy. The DPW provides FREE SAND at the following locations near the Agassiz neighborhood (Bring your own bucket): DPW yard, 147 Hampshire; Fire Station at Huron-Garden-Sherman; Fire Station at Mass. Ave. and Blake St., above Porter Square.

Please shovel openings at the corners. One reason why pedestrians walk in the street in snowy weather is because property owners forget to shovel openings to the street at corners. Shoveling out openings at street corners will be very much appreciated by all. The DPW will try to push snow back from the corners to lighten the burden of the corner property owners.

Snow notices courtesy of Astrid Dodds

Crime Watch

National Night Out Committee Convenes

The North Cambridge Crime Task Force held its first meeting to plan for National Night Out. This is a nation wide summer event to get people out one night each year and work toward making our streets safer.

If you are interested in the committee, contact Lisa at 349-6286.

Cambridge Police Sponsor Self Defense for Women

The Cambridge Police will provide a free course for women only at the Peabody School beginning March 11. The program, entitled Rape Aggression Defense will meet from 6-10 p.m. at the Peabody School Tuesdays and Thursdays for two weeks, March 11th and 13th, 15th and 18th. There will be refreshments.

This is a 16 hour awareness and self defense class that will cover home security, street safety, and rape issues. It will teach striking and blocking motions and kicks. The last meeting will be a simulation where participants can use their skills. To register or for more information, contact Susan Kale at the Cambridge Police, 349-6009.

City Wide

Leadership Council of Cambridge

The Leadership Council of the Cambridge Police is a group of Cambridge citizens and representatives from Cambridge community groups working together with a city-wide problem-solving focus, addressing crime and quality of life issues that affect all neighborhoods in Cambridge. These issues will be addressed through a collaborative problems solving model at regular monthly meetings. All members of the Cambridge community are welcome to join. Contact Vicki Boulter at 349-3236 for more information.

The new Police Commissioner, Ronnie Watson, has met with members of the steering committee, and he has agreed to meet with the Leadership Council on a monthly basis. The Cambridge Police Department will sponsor meetings in each neighborhood to identify and solve problems; build partnerships; and provide problem-solving training. The Agassiz neighborhood hopes to host a meeting this spring.

Cambridge Police Invites Gays to Join the Force

Cambridge City Manager Robert W. Healy and Police Commissioner Ronnie Watson announced today that they wished to extend a special invitation to members of the Gay and Lesbian Community within Cambridge to consider a career with the Cambridge Police Department.

Commissioner Watson said "In order to serve our entire community to the best of our ability, it is important that our police department reflect the community. We will be a better, stronger police department when we are represented by openly gay men and women."

Porter Square

The next meeting of the Porter Square Neighbors Association will be held on the third Thursday, March 20th at the Metropolitan Baptist Church, 16 Beech St. at the corner of Orchard from 7-9 p.m. For more information contact President Paul Myers at 576-3542.
Agassiz Public School

Agassiz Hosts M. L. King Breakfast

The Agassiz School hosted a breakfast in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. with a wonderful array of foods including muffins and coffee, eggs, sausages and bacon, grits and fruit on the morning of January 31.

Students from the afterschool Basics program recited pieces in honor of the event, and the breakfast was enjoyed by parents, children and community members alike.

Principal Interviews Held February 26

The final round of interviews which are organized by the Superintendent’s Office, will be held on February 26 to determine the new Agassiz School Principal. This process includes the superintendent of schools, other school department staff and community representatives. It is advisory to Superintendent McGrath, who will, if all goes as scheduled, appoint the new principal sometime in March.

Currently the acting principal of the Agassiz School is Fran Foley, now retired, but formerly principal of the Harrington School.

Lesley College

President McKenna On Sabbatical

The February edition of the Lesley News informs us that President Margaret McKenna will be on sabbatical until July. Executive Vice President Alan Fein is the acting president.

"After eleven years in this position," McKenna says, "I feel it is the right time for renewal, reflection, and to work on some long-planned projects."

The president will visit other colleges and study their entrepreneurial programs, collaborations and emerging technologies. She will visit Lesley’s program in Israel and the exchange program for the Women’s College in England.

Food Drive through March 14

LINC, Lesley’s community service organization, is undertaking a food drive to benefit the people who use the food pantry at Rosie’s Place. We are counting on food donations of non-perishable products from students, faculty and staff in the Lesley community. We also hope that our Agassiz neighbors will join in. Rosie’s is in desperate need of food to replenish their pantry.

Non-perishable food staples most needed include: RICE, PASTA, BEANS, CEREALS, VEGETABLES, & TUNA. Also in high demand are soup, crackers, fruit, tomato sauce, peanut butter and jelly.

Food donation boxes will be placed in Charlie’s Cafeteria, the Dining Hall and on each end of the hallway on the third floor of Porter Exchange. Call Christopher Kelly at 349-8505 for more information.

Agassiz Community School Programs

If you have any questions (or suggestions) regarding our programming, please call Jody Garber at 349-6287.

Reminder: We accept mid-year registrations for our Preschool and Afterschool programs. A few spaces remain in both full time and part time options in each of our three areas: preschool, kindergarten after school, and after school for grades one through five.

Outback Summer Camp

Camp brochures will be available at the end of March. Call 349-6287, and we will put you on the mailing list.

Evening Programs

BASKETBALL

On Tuesday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., the Agassiz Neighborhood Council sponsors basketball for teens in the Agassiz School gymnasium. Cost: $1.00.

On Wednesday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., it’s adult basketball (18 and older) night at the Agassiz gym.

Cost: $2.00. Great exercise, pick up games.

YOGA

Also on Wednesday evenings from 6:15 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. join Tasha Hansen, our instructor, for an hour of iyengar yoga. Feel free to come every week or whenever the spirit moves you. Wear comfortable clothes and be prepared to feel relaxed and refreshed.

Cost: $6.00 per class.
Cambridge Community TV PROGRAMS

Free Community Access to the Internet

CCTV invites you to join in the National Endowment for the Arts and the Benton Foundation initiative to bring arts and cultural content to the National Information Infrastructure. The purpose of this collaboration is to help increase the arts and cultural presence on the internet, expand the online arts audience, and provide Internet access.

You can receive personal assistance to learn the internet during public access hours: Tuesdays 3-6 p.m. and Sundays 6-9 p.m. at 675 Mass. Ave (entrance on Prospect St.) in their Central Square location. For more information, call John Donovan at 661-6900.

Spring Classes

There will be an orientation on Monday, March 3 at 6:30 p.m. for Cambridge residents. It will explain the offerings in video production, computer training and facilities and explain how to get involved in producing TV programs and creating computer based publications for Cambridge audiences.

PEAL - Poetry Events At Lesley March 19

Myra Shapiro and Beverly Jean Smith will read their poems in room 308 of the Porter Exchange Building, 1815 Mass. Ave. at 5:30 p.m. For more information call Peggy Barrasso at 349-8634.

Hip Hop Festival
February 20

Emcee Naheem Allah, center, with his daughter and technician Anthony Twombs.

Introducing Art: A Performance Series for Children presents

A SUNDAY FAMILY PERFORMANCE

CUCHULLAN • MARCH 16th

2:00 p.m. on the Agassiz School Stage

28 Sacramento St. Entrance Tickets $1.00

Irish music, song and dance funded in part by a grant from The New England Foundation for the Arts and the Mass. Cultural Council.

The Whistler March 1997

♦ Cultural Happenings ♦

Sacramento Street Gallery • 20 Sacramento Street
Kitty Winslow "Vessels and Vertebrae" March 8-April 18 • Reception March 8 from 3-5 p.m.

Kitty Winslow's paintings are highly intuitive and involve working and reworking surfaces, informing the work with a sense of history. In the most recent paintings she works on painter's drop cloths. This choice of surfaces frees her from the historical traditions of canvas while simultaneously providing its own history. These muted, time worn palettes act as foils for the coiled, spiraled forms which "grow" from the surface. These configurations recall stacked vertebrae, multiplying cells, organic matter-energy systems, concurrently containing and exploding a life force. Kitty Winslow is a graduate of Skidmore College, and she has a Masters degree from Hartford Art School.

FRESH POND BALLET
Nina Alonso Hathaway Studio
1798A Mass. Ave. • Cambridge
491-5865

• Classical Ballet
• Pre-Ballet to pre-professional
• Adult Classes
The Agassiz Neighborhood Council would like to thank our friends for help on the February 8th Winter Dance

Lesley College - for help installing the disco ball

The Embraceables - for playing dance music all night long

and for the food:

Geddywood Cafe
Chez Henri
Star Market
Cambridge Common
Christopher's
Frases on the Avenue
Boca Grande
Chocolate Box
Finnegans Wake
India Club
Mexican Cuisine
American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Housing Justice Concerts for March
March 6 Phoenix Landing - Red Time and Flunky
March 13 Kirkland Cafe - Another Planet, Sameasyou, Mind Flow, Burr
March 20 Green St. Grille - Come (members of) and Trona
Concerts benefit low income tenants facing eviction.

A Cappella Song on March 8th
The Spectrum Singers, Cambridge's virtuoso chorus, will present a program of English 20th century a cappella and accompanied part-songs and anthems on March 8th at 8 p.m. in the First Congregational Church at 11 Garden St.
Tickets are $18. For more information on the program, call 321-5823.

Announcements

Get Mediation Help for Conflicts
The Cambridge Dispute Settlement Center, located at 872 Mass. Ave. is available to help you with disputes between you and your landlord, and for family, divorce and discrimination conflicts. This is an inexpensive, effective and expeditious alternative to the legal system, with an 80% success rate (mutual agreements reached).
For more information, call them at 876-5376.

The Boston Celtics invite you to take advantage of special offerings for groups attending Celtics games. For your group of 20 or more, prices start at just $10 and groups of 40 or more will receive two complimentary game tickets.

Bonus Value Games
Milwaukee Bucks Monday, March 17 7 p.m.
Cleveland Cavaliers Wednesday, April 2 7 p.m.
L.A. Clippers Friday, April 4 7 p.m.
Charlotte Hornets Wednesday, April 16 7 p.m.

For Bonus Value Games, ticket prices begin at $18 and include:
- A coupon redeemable for a free hot dog and soft drink
- A free 50th Anniversary Commemorative Pin

For details, call Robert Vines, Boston Celtics Group Sales Representative at (617) 854-8077.

Cambridge Youth Guidance Center Pops Concert
On Friday March 7, the New Black Eagle Jazz Band, a renowned Drexel jazz group, will perform at the Stratton Student Center at MIT, 84 Mass. Ave., to benefit the Guidance Center. The space is wheelchair accessible, and free parking is available.
Tickets are $40 each. For more information contact Bliss Austin Spooner at 354-2275.

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Community Calendar March 1997

March 4, Tuesday 7:30 p.m.  Garfield St. Housing Meeting
Agassiz Community Center, 20 Sacramento St.

March 8, Saturday 3–5 p.m.  Sacramento Street Gallery – Opening reception
Kitty Winslow “Vessels and Vertebrae”

March 16, Sunday 2:00 p.m.  CUCHULLAN-Irish dance, music and song for the whole family.
Admission $1.00 Agassiz School Stage, 28 Sacramento St. entrance

March 17, Monday  St. Patrick’s Day - Cambridge Public Schools Closed

March 18, Tuesday 6:30 p.m.  ANC Board Meeting (open to the public)
7:30 p.m.  ANC Monthly Meeting
Agassiz School Dining Hall, 28 Sacramento St. entrance

March 20, Thursday 7:00 p.m.  Affordable Housing Committee Meeting
Agassiz Community Center, 20 Sacramento St.

March 28, Friday  Good Friday - Cambridge Public Schools Closed

March 30, Sunday  Easter Sunday

The Whistler is published monthly September - June by the Agassiz Neighborhood Council, distribution 2,000. Call 349-6287 to be on the mailing list. Items of interest to the neighborhood may be submitted for consideration to address below, no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication date.

The Whistler March 1997

AGASSIZ NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
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